

Lunaria  
and  
Other Poems

Stanley Grauman Weinbaum

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by

Stanley Grauman Weinbaum

Introduction by  
R. Alain Everts



*The Strange Company*



# The Poetry of Stanley Grauman Weinbaum

Early in his career as a writer, Stanley Grauman Weinbaum wanted to be, above all, a poet. Several of his friends in Milwaukee dabbled in poetry, and when Stanley arrived at the University of Wisconsin, he made friends with the celebrated poet Horace Gregory and his poet wife Maya Zatureska. Weinbaum entered the University of Wisconsin in the fall semester of 1920, with a major in Chemical Engineering.

Less than one year later, Stanley G. Weinbaum had discovered the WISCONSIN LITERARY MAGAZINE, commenced contributing, joined its staff, and changed his major to English. This professionally typeset and printed magazine was the earliest outlet for Weinbaum's poetry, and his first poem, "Lunaria" appeared in the April, 1921 issue. This was quickly followed in January, 1922 with "Semiramis," then "Nothing Much" in the March, 1922 issue; the lengthy "A Tale of the Desert" in the April, 1922 issue, "In Ispahan" (or "Isfahan" a city in west central Iran) and "A Ghazel" in the May, 1922 issue (a ghazel is an Arabic lyric poem that begins with a rhymed couplet whose rhyme is repeated in all even lines); "Yacinth" in the October, 1922 issue; the long "Two Sunsets" in the December, 1922 issue, and finally "To Kani" in the June, 1923 issue.

By the latter date, though, Weinbaum's University career was already over. Earlier that year, he had taken the place of a friend in an examination, was caught, and was expelled from the University of Wisconsin. Weinbaum was not doing a favour for a friend. The friend had bet Weinbaum that he could not pass a final exam in this particular subject that Weinbaum had not studied. Weinbaum bet him he could, and he took the exam and passed it with a good mark, and then was caught. The price of the wager was high, for Weinbaum, but he did not care. He felt he was wasting his time at the University anyway, and his genius, his academic genius, permitted him to learn anything he wanted to learn with a minimum of effort.

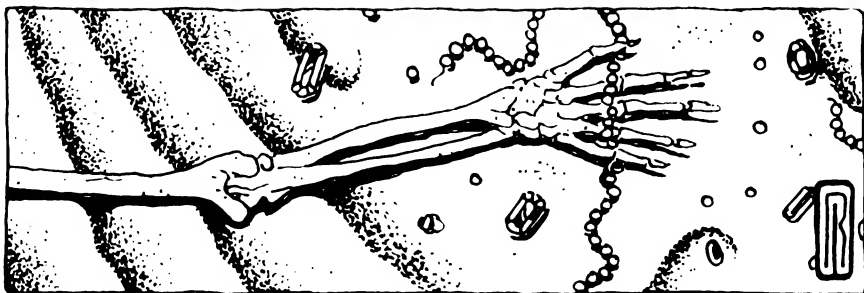
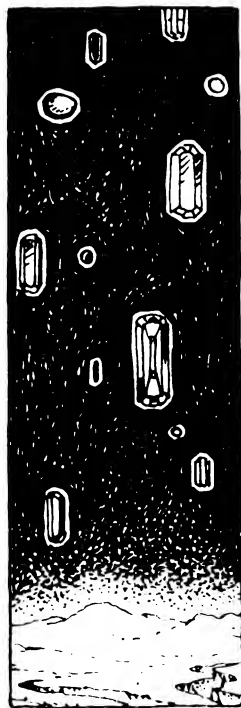
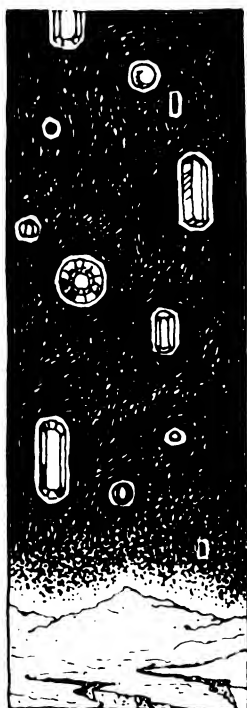
These poems of Stanley Grauman Weinbaum, un-

reprinted for 65 years, certainly show the brilliance of the budding author, and some of the themes even show the direction of his future career.

—R. Alain Everts  
Madison, Wisconsin  
20 March 1988



Stanley Grauman Weinbaum in 1921.



Y A C I N T H

Lunaria  
and  
Other Poems





## LUNARIA

### I

There flashed a momentary light  
Of honey-hued mellifluence,  
As though the cloud-swept purple height  
The amber moon's magnificence  
Streamed for an instant, garish, bright,  
On gray and gloomy battlements.

The turgid waters washed around  
The shifting bow of our canoe,  
A pall of graying flood did bound  
Our lonely world. The south wind blew  
And blew and blew with mournful sound,  
And drove us toward that towered view.

And somber, still, the great pile lay  
In shade or lunar brilliancy,  
While wolfish clouds swept o'er in play,  
Like creatures of insanity.—  
A place to jest about by day,  
By night a haunted mystery.

A universe of wave our world,  
Ourselves the two inhabitants;  
Our home a frail canoe that whirled  
Between the waves in sprightly dance;  
And still the south wind blew and hurled  
Us on, our guides, the wind and Chance.

About our craft shades came to creep,  
As cloud- and moon-born spirits roam  
The dust-gray lake. It seemed so deep  
Beneath our fragile canvas home,—  
The very waters seemed to weep  
Great tears of spray—wild sighs of foam.

Low o'er our heads we saw them soar,  
Great, gaunt, gray clouds made mad with fear,  
When suddenly the moon once more  
Struck down between them, argent clear,  
And there ahead we saw the shore,  
For we had drifted very near.

And masked and silent lay the pile,  
Save where a pale and feeble streak  
From one high window gleamed the while  
Some moon-bound soul was struggling, weak  
With pain as sharp as chamomile,  
And once we heard a ghastly shriek.

A sinister and somber scene  
Of sullen stone and writhing tree;  
And fearful forms and epicene  
Crept through the shadows silently;  
'Mid horrid thoughts of things venene,  
We drifted toward insanity.

## II

Our Mistress Moon is gay tonight—  
She peeps at us through rings of cloud;  
She calls us, carefree, dazzling, bright,  
She makes her subjects shriek aloud,  
And now and then she shields her light  
With graying mists, as with a shroud.

She calls us like some gay coquette  
Who holds a plumed fan in her hand,  
Whose hair is midnight-hued as jet,  
Whose face is smiling, fair, and bland—  
About to turn a pirouette,  
Or tread a stately saraband.

She spreads her gray-plumed fan before  
Her silver, bright, alluring face,  
And half-concealing, shows the more  
Her piquantly inviting grace,  
That men may gather to implore  
A dreamy waltz, a grave cinque-pace.

Ah, she is strong, our Mistress Moon,  
And sweet and cruel as elemi;  
She comes to us a gay triune  
And multiplies herself by three—  
In window, sky, and black lagoon,  
She glows, a haunting trinity.

She wavers in the quivering lake,  
And moves in a voluptuous dance;  
Her selves in sky and window shake  
Their heads, and stare at her, askance  
That their third self should merry make  
With passing waves in dalliance.

Ye whom the moon hath never called  
Know not the reason why we weep,  
Nor why we face the dusk appalled,  
And fear the shadow-shapes that creep,  
For ye who are not moon-enthralled,  
When the hot night has come, can sleep.

Ye know not what it is to beat  
At airy bonds that bind you tight  
In tenuous threads. The fever heat,  
Ye know it not—The futile fright—  
O God! our days may not be sweet;  
At least they shall not be as night.

Ye do not hear the night-things groan  
In dreadful impotent despair,  
Ye do not hear the mournful tune  
Of pale and ghoulish shapes of air,  
Nor do ye fall into a swoon  
At phantasms that are not there.

O gaunt, gray cloud—O pallid ghost—  
O ghastly glaring eyes of pain—  
O dreadful dreams in horrid host—  
Why do ye slay our souls in vain,  
That we must live already lost,  
And doubly-dead, must die again?

### III

Fleeing from all these shapes of fright,  
We left that haunted shore behind,  
And lo! the night was empty night,  
The wind was only wind that whined;  
The moon was but the satellite,  
That downward to the west inclined.

And dawn was near. A silver beam  
Of light suffused a heavenly bay  
Of cloudy isles. A great trireme  
With hulk of darkness, sails of gray,  
Moved silently athwart the stream,  
And seemed the bearer of the day.

## SEMIRAMIS

I cast him money where he sate  
Without the gates of Babylon,  
And stood me by, myself to wait  
Their opening at the rise of sun  
For trade, and to the other one,  
Whose sightless eyes and ragged guise  
Had moved me, "Come," said I, "Anon  
A tale—No lies!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Now Onnes was the only son  
By Assur, of his foreign Queen,  
Or, some say, by the Myrmidon  
Who kept her door at night. (I ween  
That either one the fair Hellene  
Had taken in, nor deemed it a sin  
To praise thus much the Lampsacene.)  
But, to begin

My story: Onnes when a youth,  
As an envoy was sent away  
(Because his hands were white, forsooth!  
And he was loved in Nineveh.)  
To the Barbarians, to play  
With honeyed words against their swords,  
And treat with them, perchance to pay  
In gold or herds.

And there he met her (So 'tis told)  
In Ascalon. His caravan  
Bore gifts of purple and or gold,  
For the pale hordes of grim Iran  
Were yet unseen. Here for a span  
Onnes delayed, and ever swayed  
By passions that do mould a man,  
Sought out a maid.

But she, barbaric prophetess,  
Held to her high, wild, mountain cave;  
She would not curse, she would not bless,  
She worshipped not, nor did engrave  
Her name upon the architrave  
Or lofty wall of some high hall,  
But silent sat, while her black slave  
Spoke not at all,

But brought her jewels from the ocean,  
Heart of sharks, and lizard's teeth,  
And while she mixed her magic potion,  
Watched the kettle boil and seethe,  
Or fed the ravenous lamp beneath,  
And more and more sweet oil did pour,  
And nightly did his sword unsheath  
To guard her door.

Onnes knew not her mysteries;  
He was content to serve her there,  
To bring her snakes, to trail and seize  
The lean, lithe leopard from his lair,  
For she was most surpassing fair.  
And never he in ecstasy  
Swayed to the monody of prayer  
Or litany.

For naught to him were stars that roll  
Across the harpy-haunted heights,  
The flame of her divining bowl,  
Wherein she gazed those magic nights;  
Never for him inspired flights  
In thought-winged cars up to the stars:  
He never knew the satellites  
Of ruddy Mars.

He found her name, Semiramis,  
Sweeter than singing summer seas  
That fondle Heliopolis,  
And twist the vessels at the quays,  
And softer than the melodies  
Of priests; and so he wooed her, though  
She frowned, for his own rhapsodies  
Made his love grow.

“Your voice is like a rush-bird’s note,  
Half-heard at dawn, and very far  
Over the Nile, and on your throat  
I would hang pearls where daisies are:  
For your wild rose a nenuphar.  
Since I am Onnes, Phrygian moneyes  
Are my flowers; my lupanar  
Is sweet with honeys.

“Your breasts are soft, your words are sweet,  
Your eyes are like fantastic lights  
That flicker down a city street,  
And I would lie with you of nights.”  
But she her holy mystic rites  
Ceased not, nor spoke nor moved. With smoke  
From urns carven of chrysolites  
She did invoke.

Thus Onnes urged, and his hot wooing  
Pressed on the maiden, who, I swear,  
Loved him withal. His own undoing  
Lurked in her greenish eyes: no care  
Fretted the lover, and if there  
Had chanced to show him all the woe  
That should be his, Istar the Fair,  
He had done so.



His galley of an hundred oars  
Lay moored within a land-locked bay.  
The maiden won, they left the shores  
Of dalliance; to Nineveh  
He led Semiramis away,  
Where the Great King was reveling  
Through the long night and half the day,  
In praise of Spring.

He holds a single jewel-set bone  
As scepter. Aromatic gums  
Make sweet his giant ivory throne;  
He couches on chrysanthemums.  
His rising sounds a thousand drums,  
His wine is honey; antimony  
Stains his eyes; the path he comes  
Is chalcedony.

In his high hall they gazed upon  
The heritor of Assur's crown,  
But his envoy from Ascalon  
He scorned since great Iran was down.  
Onnes he eyed with sullen frown,  
But she was fair beyond compare;  
He offered her his wide renown  
And throne to share.

She knelt to kiss his garment's hem,  
Nor had she eyes for Onnes now.  
The scintillating diadem  
That ringed the monarch's swarthy brow  
With jeweled fire that did bestow  
Its flaming guise on the king's eyes—  
Ah, that burned out her love—her vow,  
And they were lies!

Onnes, aghast, an angry word  
Shrieked forth, then frightened sought to pray  
Forgiveness, but the King had heard,  
And swiftly fled his smiles away:  
“Lady, what penance shall he pay?”  
The new Queen frowned, and had him bound  
And lodged amid most foul decay,  
Deep underground.

She cursed him, and they burned him blind;  
He could not see his dungeon room.  
“I love thy cruelty; be kind!”  
He murmured to her through the gloom,  
Like echoes from an empty tomb.  
She did but play him and dismay,  
Calling adown her catacomb,  
“Pray, lover, pray!”

But he in gods had lost his faith,  
Their power was naught, and vain their rod,  
From Marduk to that curious wraith,  
The strange, wind-tenuous, desert God  
To whom they pray in grave synod,  
In Israel, for fear of Hell.  
(But other creatures great and odd  
Have praised as well:

For once they deified the fire  
On altars hung with purple cloth  
And wet with wine, and once in Tyre  
They made a god of Behemoth,  
And prayed to him, lest he be wroth,  
And send them forms of dread, or storms.  
In Egypt, men kneel down to Thoth,  
'Gainst plagues of worms.)

Sightless, Onnes felt the bars  
Above his head, and thought a curse  
Was on him. He knew naught of stars  
That hurtle through the universe,  
Their pale mad moons, nor death, nor worse—  
With desperate hands, he burst his bands,  
And held his blind erratic course  
On desert sands.

There followed many fabulous  
Far wanderings, and it is said  
That oft some King's sarcophagus  
Was all the shelter to his head,  
And oft he couched among the dead,  
Or crept and hid in pyramid  
With world-old mummies, and his bed  
A coffin-lid.

But she—Your father's sire could tell  
The story of her deeds. She sinned  
And sinned again; no god could quell  
Her passions. Like the desert wind,  
Her arms swept eastward unto Ind.  
Full many a town she battered down;  
Half Nineveh she javelined  
Without a frown.

A hundred thousand men did dwell  
In Nineveh, but one black day,  
Rebelling 'gainst the queen, it fell,  
And its vast walls were reft away.  
And now, red throated lizards play  
Among the stone that were the thrones,  
While the thin desert grasses sway  
Above men's bones.

The mighty marble cenotaph  
Is broken down and fallen prone  
Upon the sand. Odd satyrs laugh  
Within the palace. Jackals moan  
And battle round the corner-stone;  
Wild lions roar across the moor  
Where one weak date palm, all alone,  
Marks Istar's door.

Ten thousand Nubian black slaves  
Built Babylon at her command.  
She drove them till their shallow graves  
Covered a mighty plain of sand.  
The Hanging Gardens that she planned  
Rose spire on spire, and ever higher,  
But rivaled not the mountain land  
Of her desire.

Yet are gods vengeful, and her might  
Excelled all mortals; her own son  
They sent to her one dusty night  
With murder in his mind. 'Twas done  
Under the brazen desert moon  
That saw his birth, and with grim mirth  
He buried her who Babylon  
Made lord of earth.

Her rough, unpictured crypt no eye  
Now sees, and in between her lips  
The dead sand shakes eternally,  
And through her flesh the fig root slips,  
When cold December rainfall drips  
From the blank skies—And on her eyes,  
About her breasts and shrunken hips,  
A serpent lies.

She was the greatest queen! Before  
Her throne a thousand princes bent  
To do her grace, and many more,  
With fearful mien, or reverent,  
Bore gifts of purple cloth, or sent  
Great lords to bow, that she might know  
Their love of her, and give consent  
To peace—And now—

And now her very line is dead,  
Dead the last children of her son;  
Her friends and courtly nobles fled  
Or buried far from Babylon.  
The memory of her name is gone,  
Save only where with musk and myrrh,  
By a lone shrine in Ascalon,  
Men worship her.

And Onnes, stripped of the delights  
That made court ladies call him fair,  
Must sleep by city walls of nights,  
In daylight wander here and there,  
And live by alms, and pay by prayer  
And benison for gifts—

\* \* \* \* \*

Anon

The gates are wide, and I must fare  
To Babylon.

## NOTHING MUCH

When mornings you attire yourself  
For riding in the city,  
You're such a lovely little elf,  
Extravagantly pretty.

And when at noon you deign to wear  
The habit of the town,  
I cannot call to mind as fair  
A symphony in brown.

And evenings—You blithely don  
A brevity of white,  
To flash a very paragon  
Of lightsomeness—and light!

But when the rounds of pleasure cease,  
And you retire at night,  
The godling on your mantelpiece  
Must know a fairer sight!

## A TALE OF THE DESERT

On famished Ramazin's ninth night,  
(The way to Mecca was not long.)  
The pilgrims sought with prayer and song  
To pass away the hours of light.  
Ere yet the rising moon was white,  
My tent poor Hassan sought to say,  
"Hajji, tomorrow we shall sight  
The Mecca Way."

"Enter," said I. "The wine of Gran  
Is at your left, and by your side,  
There is tobacco newly dried.  
Enter and talk, my friend Hassan."  
He came, a strong young desert man,  
And smoked a while upon the ground.  
"I'll lead no other caravan,"  
He said, and frowned.

"I'll lead a caravan no more,  
Nor take again the weary way  
To Mecca every hundredth day,  
And kill the Kabla. As before  
The desert men make love and war,  
While I alone, great Koussat's son,  
Make this dull journey o'er and o'er,  
Until it seems 'tis never done.

"They say that in a distant land, there is a mountain made  
of sand,  
And men crawl up it day by day, but never rise a single  
hand.

“Ev’n so am I, but not again  
Hassan shall lead a caravan;  
But I shall seek Feringistan,  
Far-famed in tale of lips or pen.  
Hajji, thou canst remember when  
The Frankish expedition came  
With many hundred Frankish men  
Of curious name.

“And Hajji, canst recall the maid  
Who walked among the men unveiled,  
Who faltered not, and never paled,  
Nor trembled at the robbers’ raid?  
Thou knowest how with serenade  
And son of love I sought her side,  
And nightly wooed her, undismayed  
By all her pride.

“And many a sultry desert night,  
I poured my love into her ears;  
the passions of unnumbered years  
Were in her breath, and in the light  
That glistened like a chrysolite,  
Or chrysoberyl, in her eyes;  
At night her flesh seemed pale and white  
As one who dies.

“Ah, she was cold, and very fair,  
And when she sang, I loved her more.  
And oft in flaming metaphor  
I sought to charm her with my prayer:  
‘Your eyes are like things wrought and rare,  
Brought up the Gulf in Persian ships;  
There is fragrance in your hair;  
There is a passion on your lips.’



“But she has gone; Feringistan  
Has taken her, and left to me  
The fading shade of memory,  
Like figures on a Chinese fan,  
Or like dim shadows on the span  
Of thread across deep Tophet’s hollow,  
Or like some specter, pale and wan  
Who bids me follow.

“Feringistan—Feringistan, whose borders the Barbarian  
Bounds with an iron barbican, to guard thy heart,  
Feringistan.

“For nearest west is Khurdistan, and after that, Arabistan,  
And after that the Holy Land, and after that, Feringistan.

“And I shall meet the Frankish horde,  
And frustrate all their magi’s tricks,  
Their Christians and their crucifix,  
And I shall slay them with my sword,  
In Allah’s name, and drive them toward  
The regions of the western isles,  
And seas remote and unexplored,  
A thousand miles.

“A thousand miles, a thousand miles, a thousand  
multiplied by eight,  
Will bring one to the Lonely Isles, where no man ever  
takes a mate.

“A thousand years, a thousand years, a thousand years  
increased by nine,  
Will bring one to the World of Tears, where men mate not  
with maids, but wine.

“A thousand miles, a thousand miles, a thousand  
multiplied by ten,  
Will bring one to the Iron Isles, where men mate not with  
maids, but men.

“And at the birth of every child, a black magician tastes  
his lymph,  
And if the child be undefiled, he shall be made a  
paranymph.

“But farther west than one can tell, the Jewish hero,  
Samuel,  
Sits with his elbow on his knee, and rings his silver  
temple-bell.

“And hosts of shrieking sycophants kneel down before his  
judgment seat,  
And up and down an onyx street sways files of filthy  
elephants.

“But should his magic bell be broken, Hell shall tremble at  
the token,  
Solomon shall rise in wrath, and the last judgement shall  
be spoken.

“But somewhere in the Frankish land,  
In some great dwelling made of steel,  
I shall seek out my maid, and kneel,  
And press my lips upon her hand.  
I'll draw my Allah-breathing brand,  
And smite the hosts of infidels,  
And none shall face me, none withstand,  
For fear of Afreet-haunted Hells.

“Mid towns that whirl, and worlds that swirl, and pale, fair  
women carved of pearl,  
(But I should not remember these had I not heard the  
singing girl.)

“They say, in far Feringistan, a flaming iron caravan  
Goes down an endless iron road, but will not stay for any  
man.

“There is a palace there that reels upon eleven thousand  
wheels,  
But not a single soul in all those halls to tell one how it  
feels.

“They make a crystal globe that shines upon their streets  
in glowing lines,  
And down those glittering streets at night go naked,  
unclaimed concubines.

“And out of far Feringistan,  
I’ll take a wife, in Allah’s name,  
And all those lands shall know my fame,  
And none shall halt my caravan,  
I’ll lead her back to Ispahan,  
And name my first-born son Hussein.”  
“*Salaam Aleikum*, friend Hassan!”  
“*Aleikum Salaam!* Peace be thine!”

## IN ISPAHAN

In Ispahan, the travelers say,  
There lives a negro singing-man  
Who owns an instrument of clay  
On which the winds of Allah play  
The folk-songs of Arabistan.  
Then white-robed merchants kneel to pray,  
(The custom of the Musselman.)  
A splendid, swaying, white array.  
In Ispahan.

*Salaam Aleikum, Ben Hassan!*  
O hajji, see with me some day  
Mad Ali howling the Koran  
Behind some out-bound caravan,  
Adown the long Aleppo Way,  
In Ispahan.

## A CHAZEL

I saw thine eyes untenanted of life, and mourned  
beside thy bed;  
I wept, and wondered that the dead could sleep so  
quietly, Hélène.

I wondered if the soul that dies has perished, or as  
some surmise,  
Thou hast the worlds before thine eyes as leaves  
upon a tree, Hélène.

There is a madman here who raves about a  
moonless land of caves,  
Where still a shimmering semblance paves a  
pathway on the sea, Hélène.

Ah, let him seek in west and west some land more  
dismal than my breast,  
That lightens with a wild unrest around thy  
memory, Hélène!

But when our pallid moon revives, and ghosts  
return to dusky lives,  
When other men lie down with wives, and I with  
dreams of thee, Hélène,

I never see that livid moon but that I think how  
soon—how soon! —  
Thy soul shall waken from its swoon—Perchance to  
visit me, Hélène?

## YACINTH

Men love the softness of thine arm; thine arms are  
white, are white and warm,  
And flushed as is the flower whose charm the  
Arabs name almost *Yacinth*.

This garden breeze that gently blows the satin  
where thy limbs repose  
May sigh: "The fragrance of the rose I lose as I  
have lost *Yacinth*."

The wind that whistles on the land, and fills the  
eyeless dead with sand,  
How softly does it kiss thy hand, and love thee, as  
it must, *Yacinth*!

Thy lovers journey on the sand to bring thee pearls  
from Samarkand,  
But wilt thou let *them* kiss thy hand for gems of  
wondrous cost, *Yacinth*?

For one shall fall along the way, and one the desert  
men shall slay,  
And one shall linger lone and gray.—Wilt thou not  
fear *that* ghost, *Yacinth*?

And one, whom love of thee could purge of fear,  
shall find upon the surge  
A mighty drum to beat his dirge along a distant  
coast, *Yacinth*.

And one, thy bird-eyed Bedouin, shall find Aleppo  
full of sin,  
And thou shall meet him sick and thin, and point at  
him, and boast, *Yacinth*.

And one, the little Mecca man, shall journey in  
Arabistan,  
And night shall seek him faint and wan. Then may  
he find a host, Yacinth!

I read it in the birds above the trees, and in the  
hearts thereof,  
And I have told thee not for love, so hate me—as  
thou dost, Yacinth.

And when the night shall leave thy bed, and leave  
thee still, as are the dead,  
Shall come the gardener in red, who loveth bright  
blooms, most, Yacinth.

## TWO SUNSETS

I

Adam:

I thought you'd stop ere now—up there  
At the very highest point of air;  
Surely that was your place, not this,  
Not hanging on the precipice,  
Far down, to make my shadow tall.  
And yet you have not ceased to fall  
Toward the ground. Thus far away?  
I thought perhaps your orbit lay  
Across that hill, or in the wood  
This side of it. I might have stood  
With ready arms, and eased your fall,  
And eased your warm, resplendent ball  
To the soft, scented soil, and peace.  
Yet you descend! Can you not cease?  
Shall I not reach you, then, and prop  
You with strong boughs, and make you stop  
This fatal fall? Too far! Too far!  
I can't attain to where you are  
This moment slipping by the hill  
Across the garden, falling still.  
You wane from white to fearful red—  
You're dying!

Maybe God is dead!

Yes! Surely it was his intent  
To halt you high in your ascent  
And hold you there, suspended there,  
To give a color to the air,  
To give a warmth, and shed a glow  
Upon the Garden here below,  
When Death cut short His schemes!



And I  
Must now impotent watch you die!  
There's still a flush, a little red—  
A little, little light—'Tis dead!  
'Tis dead indeed behind the hill—  
Great God, Thy creature's flesh is chill—  
Nay, I forgot. He's dead.

'Tis cold!  
I feel already growing old.  
I'd rather die—a sweet device  
To 'scape a cold, dark Paradise!

What's that? A light—nay, two—and more,  
More tiny lights, a hundred score,  
I think. Perchance a one may fall,  
And grow into a great, hot ball  
Like It. And yet that tiny bit  
Of fire's more beautiful than It!  
(He isn't dead—Those are His eyes!)  
O Lord, shield Adam ere he dies—

## II

### Last Citizen of Earth:

'Tis sickening! I'm near to death  
Of this foul gas, the putrid breath  
Of yon damned comet.

I'm alone  
With all men dead. Who could have known,  
Who could foresee, and what prevent  
This ghastly, cosmic accident?  
Has Mankind really lived in vain  
After such aeon-bitter pain?  
After the toil it took to shape  
A human creature from an ape?  
And after all the fruitless power  
To make an ape from something lower?

You sun! You're looking sickly too,  
With your smoke-dimmed, anaemic blue!  
You're as far gone as I. You're weak,  
And ill, and grown extremely meek  
Beside that cometary flame.  
Well, it took more than Man to tame  
Your fire; but now you've lived your span—  
I've lived you down, and in me Man  
Outlived you!

Surely I'll admit  
That you were at the first of it,  
That you were there when things began,  
Some little time ahead of Man.  
But Hell! At death a moment's worth  
A million cycles just at birth!  
Your blue's turned pink. You're growing weak;  
Your orb's as pallid as her cheek—  
My Love's. She's dead some hours, and you  
Have just this minute to live through.  
You wouldn't laugh if you had seen  
The way we spent last night, between  
The comet-rise and your returning  
To make one last, insipid morning.  
Look at her, Sun! After today  
There's no more death, and no decay—  
No life to die! It just confirms  
That Death died too when died the Worms.  
He perished with his own foul brood—  
The Angel starved for want of food!  
Well, Sun, to die's to make amends;  
Let's say at least we parted friends.

You're dying, Sun! There pales your red!  
And I'm not dead—not dead—not— —

## TO KANI

How sweetly through the silence swings this music;  
    with what splendors rings  
The supplience of those mellow strings, as love to  
    love replying, Kani.

Dost not prefer the midnight ways where bats with  
    bright, demoniac gaze  
Pray to whatever bats may praise, thus tortuously  
    flying, Kani?

Nay, let the lepers and the lame give homage to  
    the solar flame—  
For me the night and her whose name I fondly  
    murmur, sighing: “Kani”!

But when by visions visited I see the Master of the  
    Dead  
Stand phantom-like above the bed where, passive,  
    thou art lying, Kani,

And when Arcturus, cold and bleak, hath leveled  
    with the lonely lake,  
And thou and I alone awake, his arced flight  
    descrying, Kani,

Fling out thy light, O Laughing Fire! lest from the  
    passion of desire  
Shall leap the tall, funereal pyre, with flesh and  
    laughter dying, Kani!

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